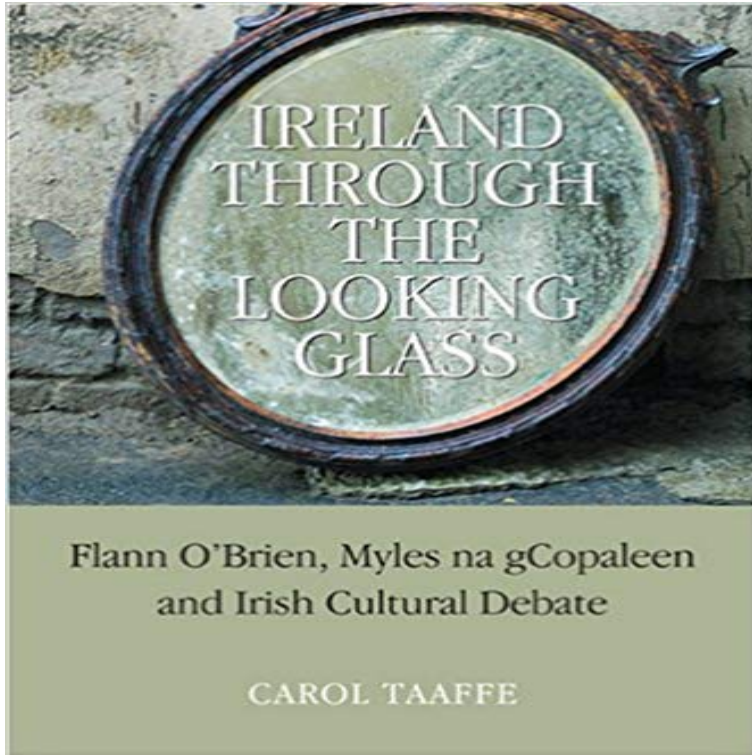


## Ireland Through the Looking-Glass: Flann OBrien, Myles na gCopaleen and Irish Cultural Debate



Ireland Through the Looking Glass explores ONolans broad-ranging humor (as novelist and newspaper columnist) in its cultural contexts. What emerges from this fresh perspective is an original portrait of him as a writer whose work was at once in conflict with, and wholly indebted to, the charged cultural politics of the new state. This is the first book to thoroughly combine both aspects of his literary career, illuminating how his episodic novels relate to the journalism which he wrote throughout his life. It demonstrates how his recurrent preoccupation with the persona and role of the author was as much shaped by the difficult position of the Irish writer in the 1930s and 1940s as it was by literary modernism. Each chapter within the book focuses on a different aspect of ONolans multi-faceted career, charting his development from a playful literary humorist to a peculiarly astute cultural critic. This is the first book to demonstrate in detail what ONolans varying blend of parody, satire and surreal humor owed to the peculiar cultural climate of the mid-twentieth century Ireland. By exploring the links between comedy and culture, it exposes the humorists curiously ambivalent response to the culture of the new state, and particularly to the position of the writer within it.

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